

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 and 19-24 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 8 and 19 are amended, and claims 17 and 18 are cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. No new matter is added. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 because the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration as the amendments solely incorporate the features of cancelled claims 17 and 18 into independent claims 1 and 8, respectively, and claim 19 is amended in view of the cancellation of claim 18; (c) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (d) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 5, 7 and 17-24 contain allowable subject matter. Applicants amended independent claims 1 and 8 to incorporate the features of allowable claims 17 and 18, and cancelled claims 17 and 18. For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that all pending claims are in condition for allowance.

Claims 1, 3 and 8-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0159677 to Hsu et al. ("Hsu"), and claims 2, 4, 6, 12 and 13 rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hsu. The rejections are moot.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of all pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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